

By Mr. CRAIG (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 3022. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain irrigation facilities to the Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. THOMAS (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 350. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the Republic of India's closed market to United States soda ash exports; to the Committee on Finance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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S. 3022. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain irrigation facilities to the Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

NAMPA MERIDIAN IRRIGATION DISTRICT TRANSFER ACT

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I am today introducing, along with my colleague, Senator CRAPO a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to transfer the Bureau of Reclamation's interests in portions of the Ridenbaugh Canal system of the Boise River to the Nampa Meridian Irrigation District. The public comment period for the National Environmental Policy Act process has not been completed, and it is my intent to request a Committee hearing to discuss any issues concerning this transfer. Thus, any parties interested in this matter will have ample opportunity to express their concerns related to title transfer.

The transfer of title is not a new idea. Authority to transfer title to the All American Canal is contained in section 7 of the Boulder Canyon Project Act of 1928. General authority is contained in the 1955 Distribution Systems Loan Act. Recently, Congress passed legislation dealing with a transfer to the Minidoka Irrigation Project and the Burley Irrigation District.

The Nampa Meridian Irrigation District diverts water from the Boise River into a system of canals and laterals known as the Ridenbaugh Canal system for delivery to lands in the district and provides drainage for district lands. Since 1878 when the Ridenbaugh Canal was first constructed, Nampa Meridian Irrigation District has been responsible for operating and maintaining the delivery and drainage system, and all project costs have been paid to the federal government.

Reclamation's interests consist of only five percent (5%) of the canals, laterals and drains and associated fee title and easements in their delivery

and drainage systems. These segments were constructed for the delivery and drainage of irrigation water. The purposes and uses of Reclamation's interests in these segments are to access, operate, maintain, and repair Nampa Meridian Irrigation District's irrigation and drainage systems. Reclamation has never operated or maintained any portion of the Nampa Meridian Irrigation District's delivery or drainage systems.

This project is a perfect example of the federal government maintaining only a bare title, and that title should now be transferred to the project recipients who have paid for the facilities and interests of the Nampa Meridian Irrigation District.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3022

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nampa and Meridian Conveyance Act".

SEC. 2. CONVEYANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) DISTRICT.—The term "District" means the Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District, Idaho.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) CONVEYANCE OF FACILITIES.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convey to the District, in accordance with the memorandum of agreement between the Secretary and the District, dated July 7, 1999 (contract No. 1425-99MA102500), and all applicable law, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to any portion of the canals, laterals, drains, and any other portion of the water distribution and drainage system that is operated or maintained by the District for delivery of water to and drainage of water from land within the boundaries of the District.

(c) LIABILITY.—Effective on the date of the conveyance of facilities under this Act, the United States shall not be liable for damages of any kind arising out of any act, omission, or occurrence based on prior ownership or operation of the conveyed facilities by the United States.

(d) EXISTING RIGHTS NOT AFFECTED.—

(1) NO EFFECT ON WATER RIGHTS.—No water rights shall be transferred, modified, or otherwise affected by the conveyance of facilities to the District under this Act.

(2) NO EFFECT ON CONTRACTUAL OR STATE LAW.—The conveyance of facilities and interests to the District under this Act shall not affect or abrogate any provision of a contract executed by the United States, or any State law, regarding any right of an irrigation district to use water developed in the facilities conveyed.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1159

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1159, a bill to provide grants and contracts to local edu-

cational agencies to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs for all kindergarten through 12th grade students.

S. 1399

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1399, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that pay adjustments for nurses and certain other health-care professionals employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be made in the manner applicable to Federal employees generally and to revise the authority for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make further locality pay adjustments for those professionals.

S. 1438

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. L. CHAFEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1438, a bill to establish the National Law Enforcement Museum on Federal land in the District of Columbia.

S. 1446

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1446, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an additional advance refunding of bonds originally issued to finance governmental facilities used for essential governmental functions.

S. 1783

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1783, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a prospective payment system for inpatient longstay hospital services under the medicare program.

S. 1974

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1974, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make higher education more affordable by providing a full tax deduction for higher education expenses and a tax credit for student education loans.

S. 2084

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. GRAMS) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) were added as cosponsors of S. 2084, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the amount of the charitable deduction allowable for contributions of food inventory, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to encourage broadband deployment to rural America, and for other purposes.

S. 2308

At the request of Mr. MOYNIHAN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island